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For Immediate Release

June 28, 2006

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ABBEVILLE, LOUISIANA MAN SENTENCED FOR TAKING BETS IN ILLEGAL GAMBLING BUSINESS

illegal bookmaking yields up to \$10 million per month

Lafayette, Louisiana . . . U.S. Attorney Donald W. Washington announced that **JASON PAUL ABATE**, age 35, from Abbeville, Louisiana was sentenced yesterday in federal court by United States District Judge Richard T. Haik to two years probation and six months home confinement for violating Title 18 U.S.C. 1955(a), operating an Illegal Gambling Business.

ABATE was charged in August 2005 following investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation into illegal gambling activities in the Acadiana area. ABATE pled guilty in February 2006. From 1998 to 2003 ABATE was an employee of M&M Consultants located in Abbeville, Louisiana. M&M consultants was a gambling business (owned by Philip Mazzella) that took bets on sporting events. ABATE took bets from customers over the telephone, picked up and paid off the bets, and determined if a customer had won or lost. The gambling business received gross bets of approximately \$10 million dollars or more per month during its operation.

Mazzella pled guilty to federal charges in January 2006 and is scheduled to be sentenced in August 2006. He faces up to five years federal imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley.

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